



76th Annual  
**CHARLES SCHWAB**  
**CHALLENGE**  
**Golf Tournament**

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### **Interview with Ryan Palmer**

ZACH DIRLAM: We'll get started with Ryan. I guess it wouldn't be the Charles Schwab Challenge without this pre-tournament press conference. What's it like being back here and playing out here at Colonial?

RYAN PALMER: No, it's a very special week for me. Obviously sleeping in my own bed 25 minutes away, and I've been a member here since 2010. My caddie James Edmondson has been a member here just as long. Yeah, it's always -- I guess we call it our fifth major.

I love being here, being a part of this membership, this great town, this city, playing this golf course, the history of it. It's always a very special week with friends and family that come into town. A little more added pressure, but one week we look forward to the most.

ZACH DIRLAM: Speaking of that history, you being a member, how exciting is the upcoming renovation, Gil Hanse involved in that? What's that like for you as a member?

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, it is. It's actually been exciting for me personally. James and I were asked to be kind of part of the team, not so much design team but just -- we had a big long lunch meeting with Gil, our GM Frank, our head of our greens committee, tournament chairman Jim Whitten. Gil went through the whole process, the design, his ideas, went through every hole, and then we were able to walk the golf course with him.

It was kind of pretty cool for myself to walk around, give him my thoughts, my ideas -- from a TOUR player's perspective, and then James gave his insight as a good amateur player, as a member.

We were able to kind of go through each hole, tweak some things here and there, and he actually was very -- he listened quite well. He took a lot of advice from us, which I was kind of surprised.

Getting to know Gil was an awesome experience, and I'm excited for this club, for this membership, and for what's going to happen come '23.

Q. What would you tell fans? The DNA of the course will probably remain very similar after the renovation; how important is that to keep it similar through the process, and what would you tell fans to expect when it's all completed for the '24 tournament?

RYAN PALMER: When we had our first lunch meeting, James at the beginning flat-out asked him, are you going to change these greens? Are you going to come in and do some things that we've seen you do before? And he goes, not at all. He's kind of going back to the way it was in 1941 when they had the U.S. Open.

As far as tee to green, nothing is changing. Our biggest changes are going to be 8 and 13, redoing No. 8, pushing it up against the left ravine, and backing 13 the way it used to play back then. It won't look that much different, but it'll play a little differently.

The one thing we talked about doing is we're taking a lot of bunkers out, and by doing that, it's making the tournament play a little harder for us as TOUR players. We're going to play out of the rough a little more. Then from the amateur standpoint they won't be playing out of the bunker as much. Your everyday amateur struggles out of fairway bunkers, and now we're going to take that out of play and just bring back more rough play.

Overall guys won't see hardly any as far as the shape of the holes except for No. 8. When fans come out in '24 you may see a little darker tint on some bunkers, the type of sand, but the shape won't change, the style of the golf course will be the same. I think it's going to be a little tougher for us, which is what we're looking for.

No, it's been a great process personally dealing with Gil and going through his ideas, and I think this club is going to be an awesome place for these members for sure.

Q. You obviously had a good showing at the Nelson; how do you feel about where your game is at coming into Colonial, and like we said, you know this course as well as anyone, but how do you feel going into it?

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, it's ready. I'm excited. We had two good rounds in San Antonio, then we had three really good rounds at the Byron Nelson. I played solid last week at the PGA, just it's the PGA Championship, and the golf course is different. You don't play it every year. I ended up missing the cut by one. But I didn't feel like I played that bad.

These last few days have been good prep, good work, so yeah, knowing everything about this golf course, every break, every subtlety about it, for me it's just a matter of just letting it happen, not trying to force it, pressure myself to play well. No, I'm excited.

Byron Nelson was huge for me mentally just to finally get the result out of it. I felt like I've been playing solid all year, just hasn't come out after four rounds. Tying for fifth at Byron Nelson was a huge step for me for the rest of the season.

I'm excited about this week, obviously, but the course is in perfect shape, and my game is ready for the challenge, and I'm excited for what my game is going to bring.

Q. Ryan, Fort Worth has taken on a new nickname, "Aggieland North," with the expansion up here. I'd like to know your feelings about that, and I'd also like to know, Justin Thomas is an Alabama guy, and want to know if you have any extra motivation going against the Bama people?

RYAN PALMER: As far as Aggie North, I hadn't had that, but that's great to hear. Texas A&M is special to me, obviously. Yeah, you're seeing more and more Aggies everywhere I go now, which is great.

As far as the Alabama deal, yeah, I listened to a lot of the things that happened, that were said. You know, good for Jimbo for stepping up and standing up to what was said. Whatever A&M is doing as far as their recruiting, nobody is doing anything different anywhere else.

I think what's going on in college football is going to end up ruining college football, what they're doing, this name, image and likeness and this transfer portal. I feel for the future of college football for sure.

You know, as an Aggie we're proud and excited for what Jimbo has been doing at Texas A&M, and maybe Saban is still bitter from getting beat last year, I don't know. I think they ended up playing in the National Championship, but yeah, he said what he said, but Jimbo was very strong in what he said, and I'm excited to see him stand up to him. I'm all on Jimbo's side.

But no, Justin and I -- it has not come across our conversations at all, but I'm sure it will one day maybe.

Q. In my mind I'm going through this Byron Nelson 20 something under, Southern Hills played so difficult, now you're here; how do you guys adjust to that? How do you look at that, and what do you think the scoring might be like this week?

RYAN PALMER: You know, each week you go into each week and you know the golf course. Everybody knew going into Byron Nelson it was going to be low. Unfortunately they can't really set the golf course up to play hard unless it blows 40 because the fairways are wide, big greens. They're like bowls so you have a hard time missing the greens there, and the par-5s obviously play so easy. So you know you're going to shoot low there.

Then you go to the PGA and you've got to change your mental approach because you know it's going to be hard. Now it's time to make pars. You leave PGA feeling like you got beat up for a little bit.

But you know your game is in good shape, now it's on to another golf course. For me it's coming here knowing how to play this course. I can show up tomorrow obviously without even playing and know what to do. It's just changing your mental approach. You get here and you do a lot of putting, a lot of chipping just to kind of get the feel of what the grass conditions are.

As far as scores this week, it stands up every year. I think one year David Toms went crazy the year he won, but I don't think the flags ever moved, and it was the softest condition we've ever played in.

But I think the golf course is in such good shape right now, we had a little rain last night, but with the winds coming, it's going to be steady 15 miles per hour the next couple days and then heavy winds on the weekend, I wouldn't be surprised with these winds, you could see a single-digit winner, I think. So we'll see how the next few days play out first.

This golf course stands up every year, and that's what's so great about it.

ZACH DIRLAM: Thank you.

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